Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1696 - February 12, 2010

Please note that this is an extended amateur radio Newsline report with three breaks and a total running time of 34 minutes. Newscast begins rightnow.

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Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1696 with a release date of Friday, February 12th, 2010 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T. Ham radio relief communications continue in Haiti, a UK publisher gives financial support to the RSGB's fight against BPL, a major sunspot appears on the surface of the solar disc, a radio prank brings a $16,000 fine and a teen finds a way to send radio waves through solid rock. Find out the details on Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) report number 1696 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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RESCUE RADIO: HAM RADIOS ROLL EXPANDING IN HAITI

Amateur radio's effort to assist in earthquake ravaged Haiti continues to expand. Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, is in the newsroom with more:

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The role being played by radio amateurs in post quake relief efforts is far from over. This with word through the ARRL that Doug Lapin, K1OY, and the Dominican Radio Club's team were to returned there earlier this past week to install another repeater which will serve as a major upgrade to the system.

There are two fixed sites at the Dominican Embassy and the UN Logistics Base. The system is used primarily by the Dominican Red Cross. Lapin and the Dominican group were to be in Haiti for two days and hoped come back the following week to upgrade the power plant.

Lapin says that he attended a recent United Nations weekly status meeting where was deluged with requests by the UN and others to use the network. He notes that there are still severe communications problems in Haiti, especially as more aid organizations get organized.

Meantime, Julio Ripoll, WD4R, reports that the University of Miami Hospital's Amateur Radio teams have been very busy passing messages between
Florida the hospital ship Comfort and around the airport in Haiti. He notes that the University of Miami Hospital's hams have also been put to work repairing radio and medical equipment for other relief groups.

Ripoll says that landline communications are still down and that cell phone service is "only about 80%. And says Ripoll, the latter is only in the immediate area of Haiti's main airport.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, in Los Angeles.

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With Haiti's communications infrastructure still in a state of disarray, it appears that ham radio will play an important role in rescue radio efforts for months to come. (ARRL)

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RESCUE RADIO: MARS UNITS TO SHARE HAITI RESPONSIIBILITY

Meantime, to assist the MARS communications support effort in earthquake relief to Haiti, the heads of Army, Air Force, and Navy-Marine Corps MARS have agreed to divvy up responsibilities among the three MARS programs. In a report carried by the ARRL, Air Force MARS Public Information Officer David Trachtenberg, N4WWL, said that the delegation of responsibility will facilitate more efficient utilization of MARS communications assets in the overall relief operation. The January 12th earthquake wiped out the island nation's communications infrastructure. (MARS Release)

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RESCUE RADIO: A LIST OF NATIVE HAITIAN HAMS

A partial list of hams believed to have been active from Haiti prior to the January earthquake has surfaced. Amateur Radio Newsline's Don Wilbanks, AE5DW, has the calls to listen for:

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According to a posting from KC8VWM, the following stations represent "known" Haitian nationals who are hams who have been operating stations in Haiti in the past year or so. They are HH2AW, HH2DMJ, HH2DZ, HH2GM. HH2FJM, HH2JR, HH5HK, HH3AR, HH6JH, HH2B and HH2LX.

There may be others but if there are they have not been heard on the air in a long time. Charles adds that some of these call signs may have expired and some hams may have relocated to other countries. Also, latest reports indicate none of these stations listed in Haiti have been contacted.

I'm Don Wilbanks, AE5DW, near New Orleans.

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At airtime nothing more is known about the health and welfare of anyone on this list. (KC8VWM via Internet)

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RESCUE RADIO: ETOW TO SEND WIND UP RADIOS TO HAITI

In other Haiti earthquake relief news, some free radios are on their way to Haiti to help the general public know more about humanitarian efforts coming their way. Jim Damron, N8TMW, has the details:

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The humanitarian organization Ears to our World has launched an initiative to distribute a substantial number of Eton Corporation-donated radios to individuals in remote and impoverished areas of that nation. These are wind-up generator powered radios which also have a built-in flashlight.

The group believes that the radios could provide life-saving medical and food/water supply information to families and communities.

The organization is currently raising funds to help pay the expedited shipping costs and perhaps allocate even more radios for a future shipment.

I'm Jim Damron, N8TMW.

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The initial shipment of over 100 of these self-powered radios was to be sent to Haiti this last week. (Southgate)

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THE BPL WAR: UK PUBLISHER DONATES TO RSGB ANTI BPL FIGHT

PW Publishing, the company that owns United Kingdom magazines Practical Wireless and RadioUser, has joined the BPL fight. This as it becomes the first corporate donor to the Radio Society of Great Britain's Spectrum Defense Fund. The company has also generously given the RSGB advertising space throughout the year to highlight the problems of Broadband over Power Line interference. (GB2RS)

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PROPAGATION: A BIG SUNSPOT AT LAST

A possible turning point in the High Frequency propagation doldrums. This as Spaceweather dot com reports the sudden emergence of sunspot 1045 which in turn has caused a sharp increase in solar activity.

The active region appeared on Saturday, February 6th. By mid-week it had produced three M-class and almost a dozen C-class solar flares. The strongest blast, an M6-class eruption on February 7th, may have hurled a coronal mass ejection toward Earth.

Whether or not sunspot 1045 is a precursor to ongoing improved solar activity or just a one-time occurrence remains to be seen. Sample sounds and images may be found at spaceweather.com. (Spaceweather)

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RADIO HONORS: ARRL ANNOUNCES LEONARD AWARD WINNERS

Three people have been named as recipients of the ARRL's 2009 Bill Leonard W2SKE, Professional Media Award. First up in the audio category is radio host Ted Randall, WB8PUM of the weekly QSO Radio Show. The ARRL Board of Directors recognized that Randall's show has become even more effective as

a podcast of consistently high quality in its treatment of issues within amateur radio week after week. Ted was the recipient of this award in 2008, as well.

In the area of video the award was given to reporter Kim Byrnes of Kansas City television station WDAF. She covered the Raytown Amateur Radio Club's 2009 Field Day operation for her station's Sunday morning news magazine. Byrnes also provided reports on the diverse aspects of amateur radio, specifically highlighting ham radio as a hobby, as an emergency communications service, and as a radiosport. She also chronicled the evolution of two-way radio technology with what the Board called a fascinating video report.

Lastly, the print journalism award was given to Vicky Taylor who is a reporter for the Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, newspaper Public Opinion. She was honored for her coverage of the licensing of 8 year old Victoria Latham, KB3SSM, and her 7 year old sister Veronica, KB3SSN. This was the heartwarming story of how these two pre-teens convinced their dad Shannon, W3SML, and mom Rachel, KB3RNP, that they were ready to get their ham tickets. (ARRL)

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BREAK 1

From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the N7VGS repeater serving Star Valley, Wyoming.

(5 sec pause here)

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ENFORCEMENT: RADIO PRANK LEADS TO $16000 FINE

A New York radio station that played what has been described as a distasteful radio prank on a listener has been issued a proposed fine of $16,000 by the FCC. But it's not what was said that got the station in trouble, but the way it tried to circumvent the FCC rules that say a person being recorded during a call must be advised before the station rolls tape. Amateur Radio Newsline's Bruce Tennant, K6PZW picks up the story from here:

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In its Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture against WSKQ Licensing, Inc. the regulatory agency says it is proposing to assess this $16,000 fine because of WSKQ's apparent willful and repeated violation of Section 73.1206 of the Commission's Rules. This by broadcasting a telephone conversation without giving prior notice to the individual being called of its intention to do so.

On August 23, 2007 the FCC's Enforcement Bureau received a complaint alleging that a station employee made a call to a woman claiming to be an employee of a local hospital. The caller told the recipient of the call that her husband had been seriously injured in a motorcycle accident and

that he died at the hospital. The complaint also alleged that the call recipient became distraught when she received this information. Thereafter, the Station employee informed her that the call was a nothing more than a joke.

Based on the complaint the FCC issued a letter of inquiry to WSKQ Licensing on September 25, 2008. In its response WSKQ Licensing stated that its parent company, Spanish Broadcasting System, Inc., contracted with a vendor, Rubin Ithier, who recorded the call for a prank call feature show. It admitted that Ithier initiated the call broadcast by the station. It went on to claim that the call was made at the call recipient's husband's request, and that Ithier performed the prank.

WSKQ Licensing did admit that Rubin Ithier did not inform the call recipient that the call was being recorded for later broadcast until after the call had been recorded and played over the air. The licensee provided a transcript of the program, the content of which confirmed that the call recipient was not given notice prior to the call being recorded that it was being recorded for future broadcast. The licensee also admitted that the Station broadcast the call twice on August 23, 2007.

WSKQ Licensing also included a recording and transcript of the broadcast. We have read it and find it far to distasteful to repeat. I does however indicate that the prank call recipient hung up the phone when she learned that the call was a prank. Also that Rubin Ithier telephoned her again to obtain her permission to broadcast the call.

In its February 4th decision to issue the proposed fine the FCC did not touch on the content of the prank call. Rather its concern was the fact that the call was recorded and replayed without the consent of the recipient. As such, the FCC says that based on the preponderance of the evidence, that the person who made the prank call willfully or repeatedly violated the Communications Act or a Commission rule. As such the FCC concluded under the procedure that WSKQ Licensing used in producing this broadcast that it is apparently liable for the willful and repeated violation of Section 73.1206 and liable for a $16,000 fine.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Bruce TennantK K6PZW, in Los Angeles.

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As is customary, the FCC has given the station's owners 30 days to pay the $16,000 fine or file an appeal. (FCC)

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RADIO LAW: CODIFYING THE VANITY CALL SIGN RULES

The FCC is in the process of making permanent the rules governing the Vanity call sign program. As regular listeners are aware, late last year, the FCC issued a Notice of Proposed Rule Making titled WT Docket 09-209 that seeks to amend the Commission's Amateur Radio Service rules. This, to clarify certain rules and codify existing procedures governing the vanity call sign system, as well as revise certain rules applicable to club stations.

Now, interested parties may make comments on this Notice of Proposed Rule Making via the Federal eRulemaking portal or the FCC's own website. Comments must be submitted by March 26, 2010 with reply comments due no later than April 12, 2010. The URL's to use are http://www.regulations.gov/search/Regs/home.html#home, or via the FCC's Web site at http://fjallfoss.fcc.gov/ecfs/. (ARRL, FCC)

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RADIO LAW: FCC CLOSES CABLE SYSYEM PROGRAMMING LOOPHOLE

Cable TV companies will no longer be able to use a federal loophole to withhold sports networks and other popular programming they own from satellite providers and other rivals. This after the Federal Communications Commission voted 4-to-1 on Wednesday, January 20th to close the so-called terrestrial loophole that was written into a 1992 federal cable regulation law.

Under that legislation a cable TV provider must let competitors carry any channel it owns if satellite connections are used to transmit the channel to the individual cable systems around the country. Until now, the provision didn't apply when cable operators sent programming over land-based networks instead. As a result cable companies have been using the loophole to withhold sports and other programming from competing services. Now that the quirk in the law is gone, satellite and phone-line television providers are calling it a big win for consumers and fair competition in the marketplace. (Published reports)

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RADIO ACCIDENTS: PHOTOS OF THE KWRM TOWER THAT SNAPPED IN HALF

High winds may be to blame for the recent toppling of an AM radio station tower out in Corona, California.

One person speculates that a gust in excess of 100 MPH during a tornado watch may have been involved. This, since the KWRM towers have withstood very high winds in the past.

The station is currently investigating to determine the exact cause of the structure's failure. Photos of the felled tower can be seen at the http://earthsignals.com/add_CGC/Images/KWRN_tower_down.html (CGC)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: KQ6FM NEW RADIO SHOW IN MONTEREY CALIFORNIA

And as most of you know, many of the voices you hear on Amateur Radio Newsline have professional careers as news reporters and voice over talent. Some even have their own radio shows and that includes our own Don Carlson. KQ6FM.

Thanks to the magic of modern digital communications, Don has just begun a new gig at a new radio station in Monterey, California known as Z-97.9 FM. What's so neat about this is that Don does the show from the comfort

of his own studio in Reno, Nevada. Its then sent digitally to Monterey where the voice of Don as D-J Don Murray is heard playing the greatest hits of the 60's and 70's over Z97.9 from 10 in the morning until 2 PM in the afternoon, local Pacific time.

You can read more about Don the radio air personality and his new job at http://www.z979fm.com/The-DJ-s/5304063   (ARNewsline(tm))

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THE SOCIAL SCENE: INTERNATIONAL DX CONVENTION IN APRIL IN CALIFORNIA

Turning to the ham radio social scene, the 61st Annual International DX Convention sponsored by the Southern California DX Club will be held April 16th to the 18th at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Conference Center, in Visalia, California. This is the premiere DX gathering in the world with top names from around the world in attendance. More information is on-line at www.dxconvention.org (IDXC)

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THE SOCIAL SCENE: HEIL SOUND TO AGAIN HOST HAM RADIO RECEPTION AT NAB

Heil Sound Limited and BSW will again co-host the annual Amateur Radio Reception at the 2010 National Association of Broadcasters Convention to be held this spring in Las Vegas, Nevada. The event is slated for Wednesday, April 14th from 6 to 8 PM Pacific time at the Hilton Las Vegas Convention Center Hotel. The hotel is right next door to the Convention Center. Just bring your NAB badge to get in.

Again that's Wednesday, April 14th from 6 to 8 PM Pacific time at the Hilton Las Vegas Convention Center Hotel for the 2010 Amateur Radio Reception co-hosted by Heil Sound Limited and BSW. We hope to see some of you there. (Heil Sound via Facebook)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD: FORMER ARRL FOUNDATION DIRECTOR PETE HOOVER, W6ZH - S.K.

We have said this way too many times in recent days and we find ourselves saying it again. That being the changing of the guard in amateur radio which continues with word of the passing of Herbert Hoover III, W6ZH, on February 4th at the age of 82.

A resident of the Los Angeles suburb of San Marino, "Pete" as he was known in the ham community was a grandson of United States President Herbert Hoover. He was also the son of former IARU and ARRL President Herbert Hoover Jr, W6ZH whose callsign Pete adopted.

Pete Hoover grew up in California, where he was an electrical engineer and venture capitalist. And following in his family's tradition of public service he was elected to the board of the National Red Cross which later became the American Red Cross Board of Governors. Although he never lived in his grandfather's home state of Iowa, he was active as a trustee with the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library Association in West Branch.

But it was to amateur radio where Pete Hoover, W6ZH, devoted a lot of his time and personal wealth. An ardent supporter of the ham radio space program in the 1970's, Pete and the late Bill Eitel, W6UF, jointly established a matching fund to encourage contributions to the amateur satellite program.

Pete was also involved in several important ARRL activities. He served as a Director of the ARRL Foundation in 1976 and as a member of the ARRL Long Range Planning Committee from 1978 to 1981. Locally, W6ZH, served as Vice President and Trustee of the Pasadena Radio Club and was also a longtime member of the Southern California DX Club.

Pete Hoover, W6ZH, is survived by his wife Meredith, his son Stephen Hoover, his daughter Leslie Hoover-Lauble along with his grandchildren and great grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to one of several charitable institutions: Doheney Eye Institute, 1490 San Pablo St., Los Angeles, CA 90033, Hoover Institution, 434 Galvez Mall, Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305-6010, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library Assoc., 302 Parkside Drive, West Branch, IA 52358, House Ear Institute, 2100 W. 3rd St., Los Angeles, CA 90057

A future memorial service is being planned. (ARNewsline(tm) from various published reports)

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HAM KILLED IN POWER PLANT INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENT

A ham has lost his life in an industrial accident at a power generating facility that is under construction in Connecticut. According to the Shore Point Amateur Radio Club, member Chris Walters, N0HVK, of Florissant, Missouri, was one of five workers killed in the Sunday, February 7th explosion at the Kleen Energy Plant near the city of Middletown, Connecticut.

Walters, a 48-year-old father of three was in Connecticut to work a temporary job as a safety manager for an electrical subcontractor at the plant where the accident occurred. According to Middletown Mayor Sebastian Giuliano the workers were purging a natural gas pipeline when the explosion occurred. The cause of the accident remains under investigation.

In a posting to its website the Shore Point Amateur Radio Club said that Walters has been a member of the club since October of 2009. It said that N0HVK embodied the spirit of amateur radio by volunteering for community

events such as walk-a-thons, fundraisers and by attending club meetings. He was also a part of the club's first Field Day.

Chris Walters, N0HVK, is survived by his wife Fran and three children, ages 10, 13 and 15. The Shore Point Amateur Radio Club says that it plans to take up a collection to assist the family. (Southgate, telegraph.com, CBC)

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EMERGING TECHNOLOGY: NIST UNVEILS THE WORLDS MOST ACCURATE CLOCK

Researchers at the National Institute of Standards and Technology have produced what they call an enhanced version of an experimental atomic clock. One based on a single aluminum atom that is more than twice as accurate as the previous pacesetter based on a mercury atom.

The new clock is the second version of NIST's "quantum logic clock. It derives its name from the fact that it borrows the logical processing used for atoms storing data in experimental quantum computing. This is another major focus of the same NIST research group.

According to measurements to be reported in Physical Review Letters, the new aluminum atom clock should neither gain nor lose one second in about 3.7 billion years. (Science OnLine)

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HAM HAPPENINGS: GB10GKA TO REMEMBER PORTISHEAD RADIO

If you are a follower of radio history then this is for you. As you may be aware, Portishead Radio using the callsign GKA was a radio station in England that provided worldwide maritime communications and long-range aeronautical communications from 1928 until 2000. At its height of operation it was the world's largest and busiest radiotelephony station that in 1974 employed 154 radio operators who handled over 20 million words per year.

Now, to mark the 10th Anniversary of the closure of Portishead Radio the special callsign GB10GKA has been authorized from April 30th through May 27th. Operations will be on all High Frequency bands with each position manned by an ex-GKA Radio Officer.

Communications will primarily be on CW. Hours of operation will be dependent on individual operator's free time. More information about Portishead Radio can be found on-line at www.gka.btinternet.co.uk. (GB2RS)

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BREAK 3

From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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DX

In DX, word that TX4T is the callsign of F6BEE, FO8RZ, G3TXF, and VE2TZT as they activate Tahiti on 160 through 10 meters through February 24th. They hope to take part in the CQ WPX RTTY Contest (on February 13th and 14th as well as the ARRL DX CW Contest the weekend of February 20th and the 21st. QSL via the bureau to G3TXF.

N7MSU should be on from Belize as V31SU through February 24th. His operation will be on CW and SSB concentrating on 40 and 20 meters. QSLs should be sent to his home call either direct or via bureau.

And while kind of short notice, VK6DXI, will be in Zimbabwe through February 13th. While he does not have much time for amateur radio he still hopes to make some QSOs as Zed-21-D-X-I. If you work him please QSL via SP5UAF.

NE8Z will once again be in Ecuador and plans to be active through February 24th as HC1MD. Activity should be on 80 through 10 meters using CW, SSB, RTTY and PSK31. QSL via K8LJG.

DL1NL is currently active "portable OA4" from Lima, Peru. He will be there through mid-February mostly on CW from Radio Club Peruano as time permits. His recent activity shows he can usually be found on 20, 17 and 15 meters between 1530 to 1730 UTC. QSL via his home callsign.

N0RC will be active "stroke OX3" from Thule, Greenland between March 22nd and April 8th. His operation will be limited as work permits, but he plans to operate at least every other day. QSL to N0RC direct or via the bureau.

Lastly, our old friend John Abbruscato, W5JON, will again be operating from a hilltop QTH overlooking the Caribbean Sea, at Marigot Bay on St. Lucia. Listen out for him as J68JA from March 2nd to the 11th on 160 through 6 meters. QSL direct to W5JON. He adds that as in the past, his XYL Cathy,W5HAM, will be very busy pool side.

(Above from various DX news sources.)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: TALKING THROUGH ROCK

And finally this week, the story of a young experimenter who is taking communications underground. And his work might save lives. We have more in this report from Amateur Radio Newsline's Norm Seeley, KI7UP:

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According to National Public Radio, caves are some of the last places in the world left to explore. And while cave exploration or caving is relatively safe, if something goes wrong a rescue can take days or longer.

Part of the delay is because cell phones, walkie-talkies and most radio systems simply do not work when trying to communicate underground through hundreds of feet of solid rock. But now a 16 year old New Mexico teenager named has Alexander Kendrick has developed a device that may make it possible for someone trapped hundreds or even thousands of feet under the Earth's surface to text a message for help.

NPR says that Kendrick's device looks something like a computer attached to a ham radio transceiver. But ham radio it isn't because it transmits data using ultra frequency radio waves that can penetrate rock more easily than on the high frequency or VHF bands.

The first test of Kendrick's cave communications device was at the famed Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico. Kendrick was at the 950 foot level below the surface and transmitted the single word "happy" to a receiving station manned by his father directly above. The screen on the surface displayed only the letters "a-p-p-y." Not 100% copy bit in an emergency situation more than enough to alert rescue workers of a cave explorers need.

Even at only this level of success observers believe that Kendrick's invention holds the potential to significantly speed the rescue process with the ability to text from underground caves. They say that it may have other applications as well.

As far as we can determine, Alexander Kendrick is not a radio amateur. No matter, because for his development of this new underground texting communicator he was named as the winner of the 2009 International Science Fair. As such, he was awarded a new computer, a trip to Switzerland and a $12,000 cash prize. We say congratulations on a job well done.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Norm Seeley, KI7UP, in Scottsdale, Arizona.

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You can read and hear more about this remarkable teenage inventor at http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId3116417&ft=1&f1001 (NPR)

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, The RAIN Report, the RSGB, the Southgate News and Australia's WIA News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline@arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), 28197 Robin Avenue, Santa Clarita California, 91350

Before we go, a reminder that the nominating period for the 2010 Amateur Radio Newsline Young Ham of the Year Award is now open. Each year, we here

at the Amateur Radio Newsline in association with Vertex Standard Corporation -- the makers of Yaesu brand ham radio gear -- and CQ Magazine combine to honor a ham radio operator age 18 or younger for his or her contributions to ham radio or to society itself through ham radio.

All nominations and materials required by the official rules must be received by Amateur Radio Newsline no later than midnight on May 30th. Both "mail-in" and electronic submissions are being accepted this year. Full rules and a downloadable nominating form are now on our website at www dot arnewsline dot org. Just scroll down until you see "2010 Young Ham of the Year Awards Now Being Accepted" and click on the word "here" to download the directions and the form. We look forward to hearing from you.

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Frank Haas, KB4T, saying 73 from Holly Hill, Florida, And as always, we thank you for listening.

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